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(54) Arrangement for sliding doors on mobile units

(57) The invention concerns an arrangement for sliding doors of the type where a door leaf (3) comprises a number (n) of interlinked and jointed sections (4:1 - 4: n) in which adjoining sections are able to rotate around a joint axis (A) from a position in which the sections are in alignment with each other to a relative angled position, whereby the door leaf can slide in the door opening

(6) in guides (8, 9), each of which comprising a first and a second interacting guide element (8', 8"; 9', 9") arranged on two opposing end edges (22, 23) of the door leaf and the corresponding sides of the door opening. To obtain a sound insulating door, there is an elastically deformable material between the adjoining and relatively flexible sections (4:1-4:n) to separate the sections from each other.

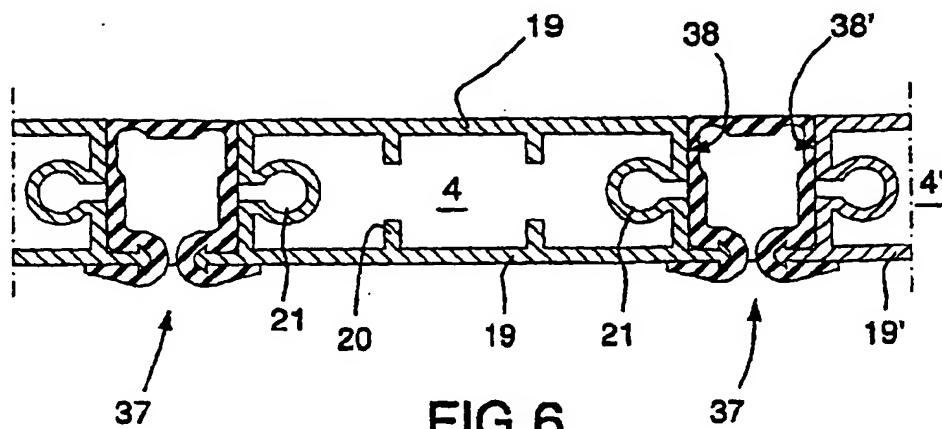
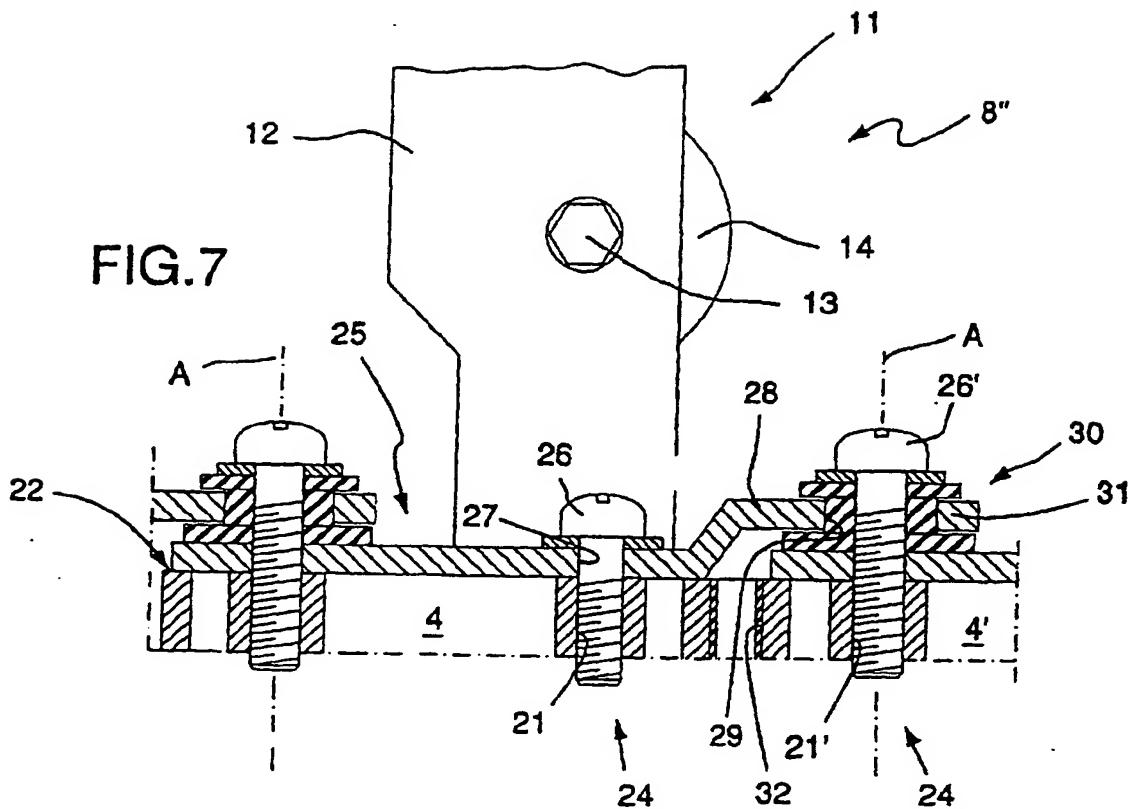


FIG.6

FIG.7



Description

[0001] The present invention concerns an arrangement for sliding doors on mobile units such as lift cages according to the preamble of Claim 1.

[0002] Sliding doors of this type are used in a number of different applications in which the doors are usually arranged to move in the vertical or horizontal plane relative to the door opening. With regard to sliding doors on mobile units such as lift cages and similar devices, there is a particular necessity for them to exhibit sound-insulating qualities, as problems with noise, resonance vibration and structure-borne sound together with other problems are generated while the mobile unit is in motion. On lift cages with sliding doors of the type referred to, i.e. in which the door leaf principally comprises a number of interlinked and jointed sections, a large proportion of the noise is generated in the joints between the sections. This has been a problem especially on rack and pinion lifts due to the many moving mechanical parts that are used to move the lift cage along the mast. It has also become evident that the noise and vibration generated during the motion of the lift cage increases proportionally to the speed, which, as should be understood, limits the speed at which the lift can move without noise being perceived as trying by the occupants.

[0003] One object of the present invention is therefore to achieve an arrangement on a sliding door of the aforesaid type, whereby the noise issue of such a door is essentially eliminated. In particular, the intention is to achieve sound-insulating properties of sliding doors that are arranged in mobile units such as lift cages.

[0004] This is achieved by the arrangement in accordance with the present invention exhibiting the distinctive features and characteristics specified in the following claims.

[0005] The following is a description of this invention with references to attached drawings, where fig. 1 is a perspective view of a lift cage with sliding door, fig. 2 is a front view of the sliding door shown in fig. 1, fig. 3 is an enlargement view of an upper guide in the sliding door in the form of a cross section along the line III-III in fig. 2, fig. 4 is an enlargement view of a lower guide in the sliding door in the form of a cross section along the line IV-IV in fig. 2, fig. 5 is an enlargement view of a cross section along the line V-V in fig. 2, fig. 6 is an enlargement view of a cross section along the line VI-VI in fig. 3, fig. 7 is an enlargement view of a cross section along the line VII-VII in fig. 4, fig. 8 is a cross section view seen from above of several sections included in the sliding door, fig. 9 is a perspective view of a jointing element included in the sliding door, and fig. 10 is an enlarged cross section view of two adjoining sections.

[0006] Referring to fig. 1, a horizontal opening door fitted on a conventional lift cage 2 is generally designated 1. The door leaf 3 is of louvre type, i.e. comprising several sequentially arranged vertical and interlinked jointed sections 4, in which each section is designed as

a principally rigid unit. The flexible joint between the sections is defined on the drawings as a joint axis A, around which adjoining sections 4, 4' can rotate in relation to each other between a position in which the sections are aligned with each other and a position where they are at an angle to each other.

[0007] When carrying out opening and closing motions, the door leaf 3 is moved horizontally as indicated by the double-headed arrow 5. When the door 1 is open, the door leaf 3, as shown in fig. 1, is moved to one side so that it principally surrounds one wall of the lift cage 2, whereby the lift cage 2 opening 6 is essentially completely exposed. Given that the sliding door moves outside and around one corner of the lift cage 2, the particular use of this type of door is in areas where the door must not occupy any part of the lift cage load carrying surface 7. Furthermore, conveying e.g. pallets and other bulky objects in and out of the lift cage is facilitated due to the ability to completely expose the door opening 6.

[0008] The door leaf 3 slides in the lift cage 2 along upper and lower guide members designated 8 and 9 respectively running between the door leaf 3 and the lift cage 2. Each guide member comprises a first and a second interacting guide element 8', 8" and 9', 9" respectively, where at least one of the said guide elements comprises an elastic material.

[0009] As illustrated in fig. 3 and fig. 4, the first guide element of the upper guide member 8 comprises a guide rail 10 arranged on the lift cage and the second guide element a carriage 11 arranged at the top of the said sections. The said carriage 11 comprises a mainly U-shaped supporting arm 12 with a journaled roller 14 that runs in a groove in the guide rail 10 and has an external circumference of an elastomeric material, which acts on the said guide rail. The first guide element of the lower guide member 9 comprises a guide rail 15 made of joined sheet with a grooved channel 16 and the second guide element comprises a journaled 17 roller 18 running along the said channel 16 with a circumference of elastomeric material that acts on the inside surfaces of the grooved channel 16 in the guide rail 15.

[0010] The sections 4 are manufactured of a lightweight material, which in this embodiment comprises extruded aluminium and, as illustrated in fig. 5, the sections 4 are produced with an outer hollow part 19, from which a number of lateral reinforcements 20 emanate. At the ends of the bottom and top edges of each section 4, generally designated 22 and 23 respectively in fig. 6 and fig. 7, there are openings 21 running continuously along the length of the section.

[0011] Referring to fig. 6 and fig. 7, each such opening 21 is designed to receive a continuous means of attachment, generally designated 24, running through the length of the section to secure a respective means of connection, generally designated 25, to the ends of the top and bottom edges, 22 and 23 respectively, of each section 4. Each such means of attachment 24 comprises a shaft 26 running through holes 27 arranged in the

means of connection 25 and at each end is fitted with a means 28 for fastening the means of connection 25 to the ends of each edge 22, 33 of the section 4. For the described embodiment of this invention, the said means of attachment 24 comprises a thread 29 and associated nut 30 on each end of a shaft 26 but could equally comprise a groove with associated retaining ring on each end of the shaft or any similar arrangement.

[0012] Each of the said connecting devices 25 fitted on one section 4 exhibits a cantilever 31 projecting from the section in the same direction, whereby an adjoining section 4' illustrated in the figure on the right is flexibly joined between the said projecting cantilevers 31 with an attaching device 24 similar to the type described above. For the flexible joint between the said two adjoining sections 4 and 4' respectively, running the length of the opening 21' in the section 4', there is a shaft 26' that, via a bearing box 32 at the ends, is flexibly connected to both projecting cantilevers 31 running through holes 33 arranged in each of them. For the flexible joint between the sections 4 and 4', the projecting cantilever 31 on the connecting device 25 has through bending been laterally displaced to a certain degree from the principal plane of the connecting device and thereby also the ends of each edge 22, 23 of the section 4 seen from the inside. In this way, a space is formed so that the following section 4' can be accommodated and flexibly connected to the area between the said projecting cantilever 31, as illustrated in fig. 6 and fig. 7. As illustrated in fig. 6 and fig. 7, the connecting devices 25 will consequently be arranged in a partly overlapping and linked manner between the consecutively disposed sections 4, 4'. The joint axis A between the adjacent sections 4, 4' is applied to one of the sections 4' and runs through the same so that the second section 4 can pivot at a radial distance from the section 4' around the joint axis A, which is also illustrated in fig. 8.

[0013] The bearing box 32 comprises a somewhat damping elastic material and is arranged in the vicinity of the flexible joint between the said connecting device 25 and attaching device 24 so that structure-borne sound is not conveyed to the flexible joints of adjoining sections 4, 4'.

[0014] The bearing box 32 comprises a first and a second part 34 and 35 respectively, where each such part is designed as a sleeve 36 with a support flange 37 made of rubber or equivalent plastic material. The sleeve-shaped part 36 is employed in a ring-shaped area defined between the connecting device 25 hole 33 and the part of the shaft 26' that runs through the said hole. The sleeve-shaped part 36 thereby forms in principle a radial bearing between the connecting device 25 and the shaft 26' running through the section 4' and acts as an elastic damper that separates the said parts from each other in the flexible joint between the sections 4, 4'. The support flanges 36 of the first part 34 and the second part 35 form in a similar way an axial and elastic insulating bearing between the projecting cantilever 31

of the connecting device 25 and the section 4'.

[0015] It should be understood that in the same manner as described above, an adjacent third section 4" is flexibly joined to the second section 4' and so on to create a succession of (n) pivoting sections 4:1 - 4:n forming a continuous door leaf 3.

[0016] With reference to fig. 6, jointing elements of slightly yielding elastic material generally designated 37 are fastened to the area or to the joint between each of the adjoining sections 4, 4' and the remotely located flanking edges 38, 38'. The said jointing elements 37 are intended to achieve a relative butt joint between the sections 4, 4' so that structure-borne sound is not conveyed between them. Jointing element 37 is also intended to act as a crush guard between the sections 4, 4' while the door leaf 3 is in motion and to prevent snow and dust from penetrating into the lift cage 2. The material in the jointing element 37 should be chosen so that the relative flexibility between the sections 4 is not negatively affected. For example, the jointing element 37 can be made of ethylene-propylene rubber or some other suitable thermoplastic or synthetic rubber that is easy to form and can be produced by extrusion.

[0017] A jointing element 37 is exemplified in fig. 9, from which it is evident that it mainly comprises of a flat extrusion exhibiting a fluted depression generally designated 39 that is arranged along the side edges of the extrusion and two longitudinal folding notches 40 that are located in the centre of the extrusion, along which the extrusion can be folded so that when mounted, it exhibits a mainly groove-shaped appearance illustrated in fig. 10.

[0018] When fitted and in cross-sectional view, the extruded jointing element 37 exhibits a first and a second partition 41 and 42 respectively that via joints generally designated 43 are connected to the side edges 38, 38' of the adjoining sections 4, 4'. The first and second partitions 41, 42 are relatively connecting via a first sidewall 44 forming a transition that is in line with the outer sides 45, 45' of the adjoining sections 4, 4'. The fluted depressions 39 running along the side edges each define a seat or a pick-up area corresponding to a protrusion 46, 46' coming from the butting side edges 38, 38' of the respective adjoining sections 4, 4'. The said protrusions 46, 46' are designed to extend the outsides 47, 47' of the adjoining sections 4, 4' to provide, as should be understood, support and a contact surface for the adjoining sections 4, 4' when they are in alignment. In order to prevent structure-borne sound from being conveyed between the said protrusions 46, 46' and thereby also between adjoining sections 4, 4', the said protrusions are contained within the fluted depressions 39 in a manner in which they are essentially surrounded and embedded.

[0019] The joints 43 between the first and second partitions 41, 42 of the jointing elements 37 and the abutting side edges 38, 38' comprise a sharp-edged and almost arrow-like boss 48, 48' arranged on the free end of the

protrusion 46, 46', which, in order to attain a locking action between the respective partitions 41, 42 of the jointing element 37 and the abutting edges 38, 38' of the adjoining sections, interact with an undercut groove 49 that is arranged in the bottom of the fluted depression 39. As a result of this design, the jointing element 37 can very easily be anchored to and engage a considerably locking grip in the abutting side edges 38, 38' of the adjoining sections 4, 4' with only hand pressure or with the use of a rubber mallet.

[0020] As the joint axis A is located in one of the adjoining sections 4, 4' and the jointing element has partly a divisible sidewall formed by both the protrusions 46, 46' and the fluted depressions 39 surrounding the said protrusions and partly a flexible sidewall 44, it has the advantage that the adjoining sections 4 act like a hinge that can be rotated relative to each other without the jointing element 37 offering any appreciable resistance to the rotating motion. In the main, this property is achieved partly because one of the sidewalls of the jointing element 37 is divisible so that rotation is obtained only via the first sidewall 44 and partly because the first sidewall is not compressed during the actual rotating motion but is only folded along the notches 40. This should become clear after a close study of fig. 8 and fig. 10. It should also be understood that such detrimental compression of the first sidewall of the jointing element would nevertheless arise if the joint axis A were to be located on the geometrical axis between the sections 4 and 4', i.e., principally half way between the adjoining sections.

[0021] The present invention is not limited to the above description or as illustrated in the drawings but can be changed and modified in a number of different ways within the framework of the idea of invention specified in the following claims.

Claims

1. Arrangement for sliding doors on mobile units such as lift cages and of the type where a door leaf (3) comprises a number (n) of interlinked and jointed sections (4:1 - 4:n) in which adjoining sections are able to rotate around a joint axis (A) from a position in which the sections are in alignment with each other to a relative angled position, whereby the door leaf can slide in the door opening (6) in guides (8, 9), each of which comprising a first and a second interacting guide element (8', 8"; 9', 9") arranged on two opposing end edges (22, 23) of the door leaf and the corresponding sides of the door opening, characterised in that between the adjoining relative to each other flexible sections (4:1-4:n) is an elastically deformable material separating the sections from each other and that at least one of the door leaf's respective interacting first and second guide elements (8', 8"; 9', 9") comprises an elasti-

cally deformable material separating the door leaf guide elements (8", 9") and the guide elements (8', 9') arranged in the sides of the door opening.

- 5 2. Arrangement according to Claim 1, characterised in that the abutting side edges (38, 38') of adjoining sections (4, 4') are located at a distance from each other that is defined by the flexible joint between the sections and that continuous jointing elements (37) of elastically deformable material are fastened between the abutting side edges of the said adjoining sections flexibly joining the abutting side edges of the sections with each other.
- 10 15 3. Arrangement according to Claim 2, characterised in that the jointing element (37) is fluted and exhibits a first and as second partition (41, 42) that via a joint (43) is connected to the abutting side edges (38, 38') of the adjoining sections (4, 4'), a first sidewall (44) connecting the first and second partitions forms a transition between one outside surface (45, 45') of adjoining sections, a fluted depression (39) arranged on each longitudinal side edge of the jointing element that surrounds protrusions (46, 46') emanating from each of the abutting side edges of adjoining sections in a position in which said adjoining sections are aligned with each other to form a transition between the second outside edges (47, 47') of adjoining sections.
- 20 25 30 35 4. Arrangement according to any one of the previous claims 2 or 3, characterised in that the sidewalls (44) of the jointing elements (37) include folding notches (40).
- 40 5. Arrangement according to Claim 3, characterised in that the opposing protrusions (46, 46') are designed as extensions of the respective sides (19, 19') of adjoining sections (4, 4').
- 45 6. Arrangement according to Claim 3, characterised in that the joints (43) comprise a sharp-edged boss (48, 48') on the free end of each protrusion (46, 46') that interacts with an undercut groove (49) arranged in the bottom of the fluted depression (39).
- 50 7. Arrangement according to any one of the previous claims, characterised in that the joint axis (A) between adjoining sections is located on one of the sections (4') and runs through it so that the adjoining second section (4) can rotate around the joint axis at a radial distance from the said section (4').
- 55 8. Arrangement according to any one of the previous claims, characterised in that the flexible connection (A) between adjoining sections (4, 4') comprising a connecting device (25) that is connected to each opposing end (22, 23) of one section (4) ex-

hibits cantilevers (31) that project in the same direction from the said section and between them accommodate an adjoining section (4') in a rotating bearing joint.

9. Arrangement according to Claim 9, **characterised in that** the door leaf guiding elements (8", 9") are interconnected with the operative connecting devices (25) of adjoining sections (4, 4').

10. Arrangement according to any one of the previous claims, **characterised in that** the guide elements (8'; 9') arranged in the door opening comprise guide rails (10, 15) and that the door leaf guide elements comprise rollers (14; 18), whereby the door leaf (3) is guided in the door opening (6) through interaction between the said rollers and guide rails.

11. Arrangement according to Claim 10, **characterised in that** the separating elastic material is arranged on at least one of the interacting parts for the rollers (14; 18) or guide rails (10; 15).

12. Arrangement according to Claim 11, **characterised in that** the elastic material is arranged in the form of a covering or a layer outside the rollers (14; 18).

13. Arrangement according to the previous Claims 8 or 9, **characterised in that** the flexible joint between adjoining sections (4, 4') comprises a shaft (26') running through one of the sections (4') and is flexibly joined at the ends to the cantilevers (31) on the connecting devices (25) of the adjoining second section from an adjoining section via a hole (33) arranged in each part, through which the respective end of the shaft runs, whereby a ring-shaped bearing box (32) comprising an elastic material is located in an area between the said axle end and the hole.

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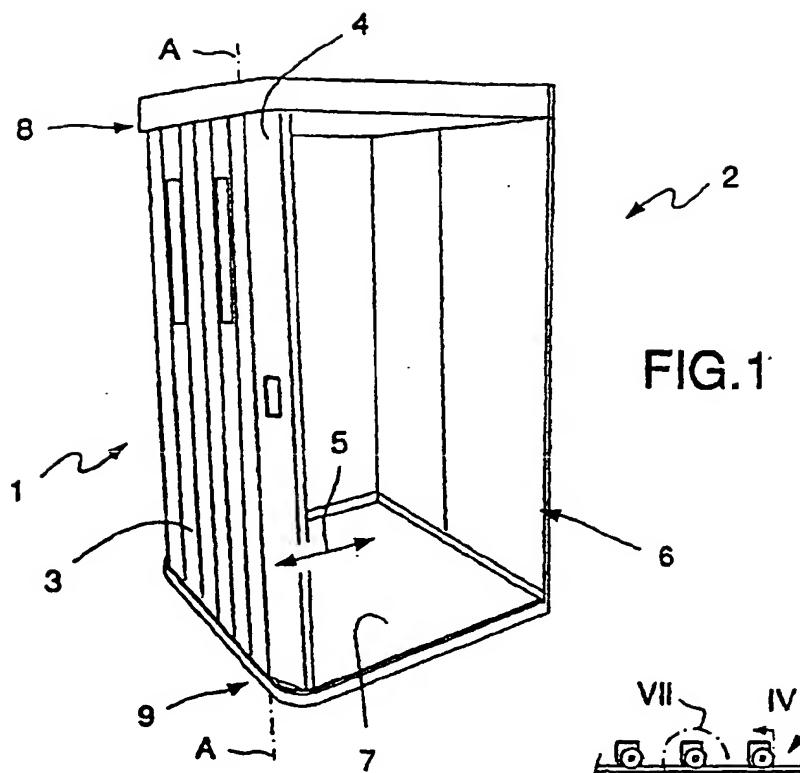


FIG.1

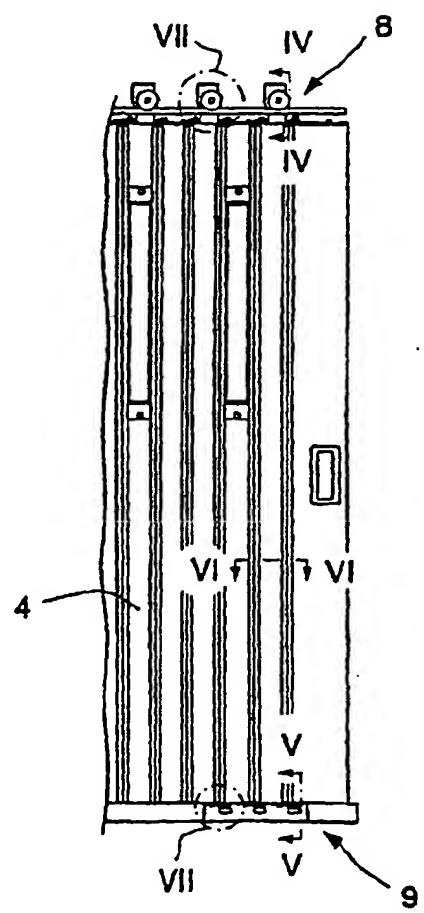


FIG.2

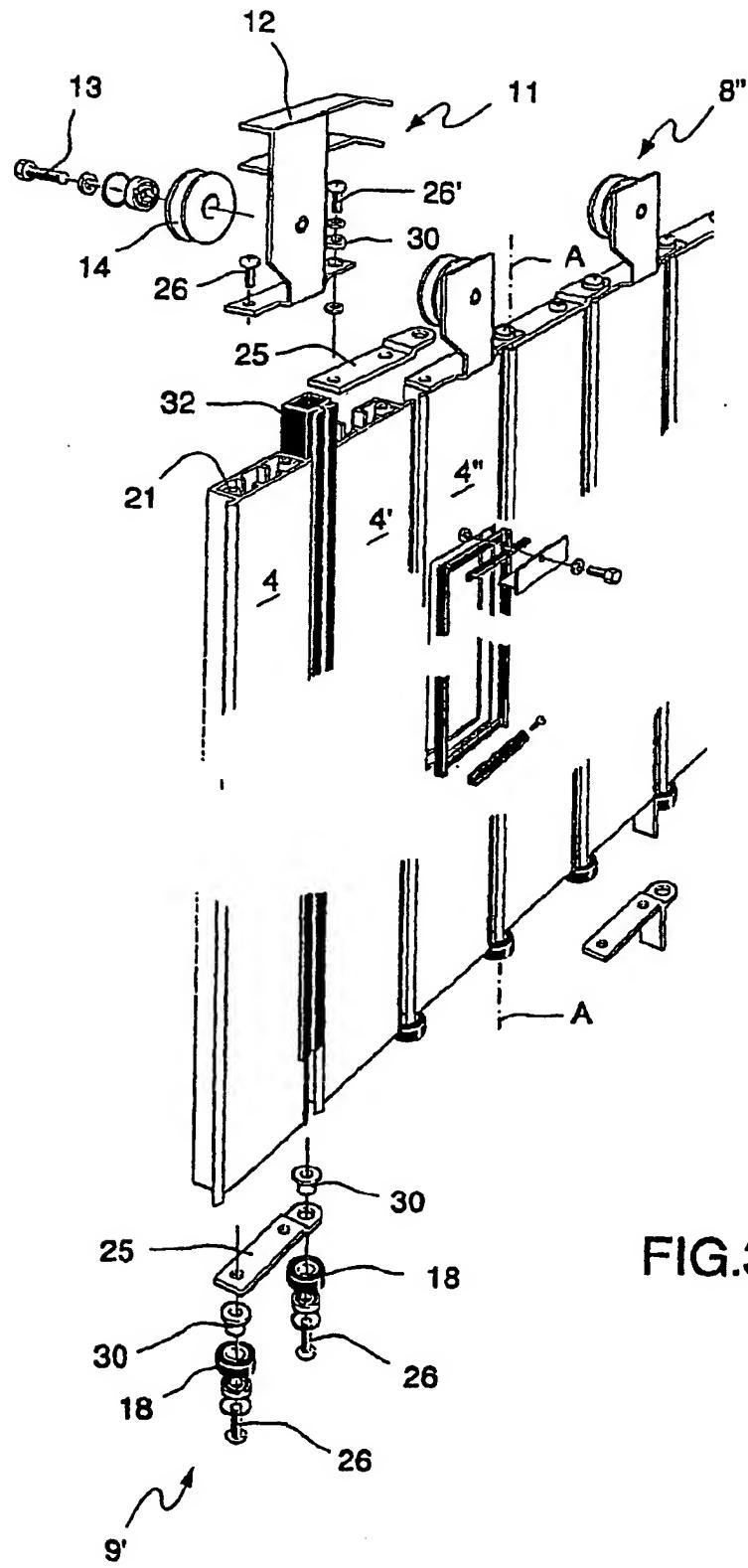


FIG.3

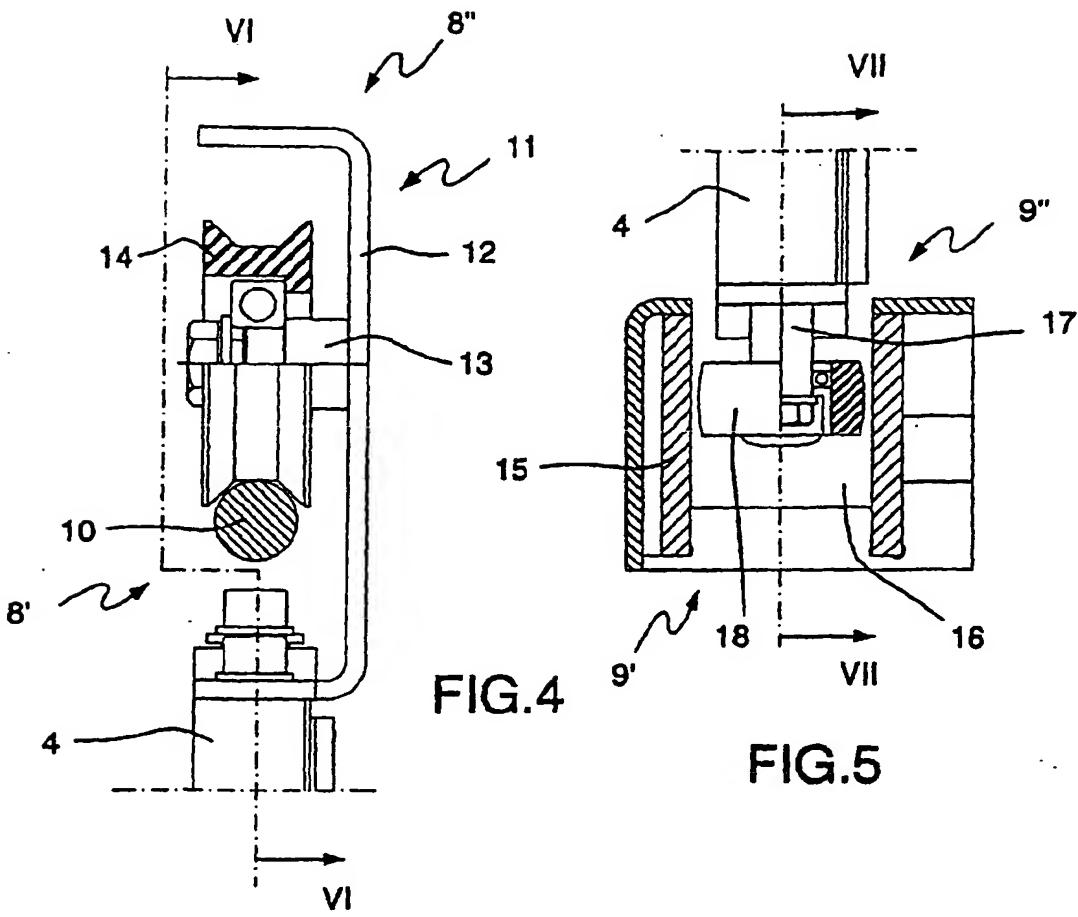


FIG.7

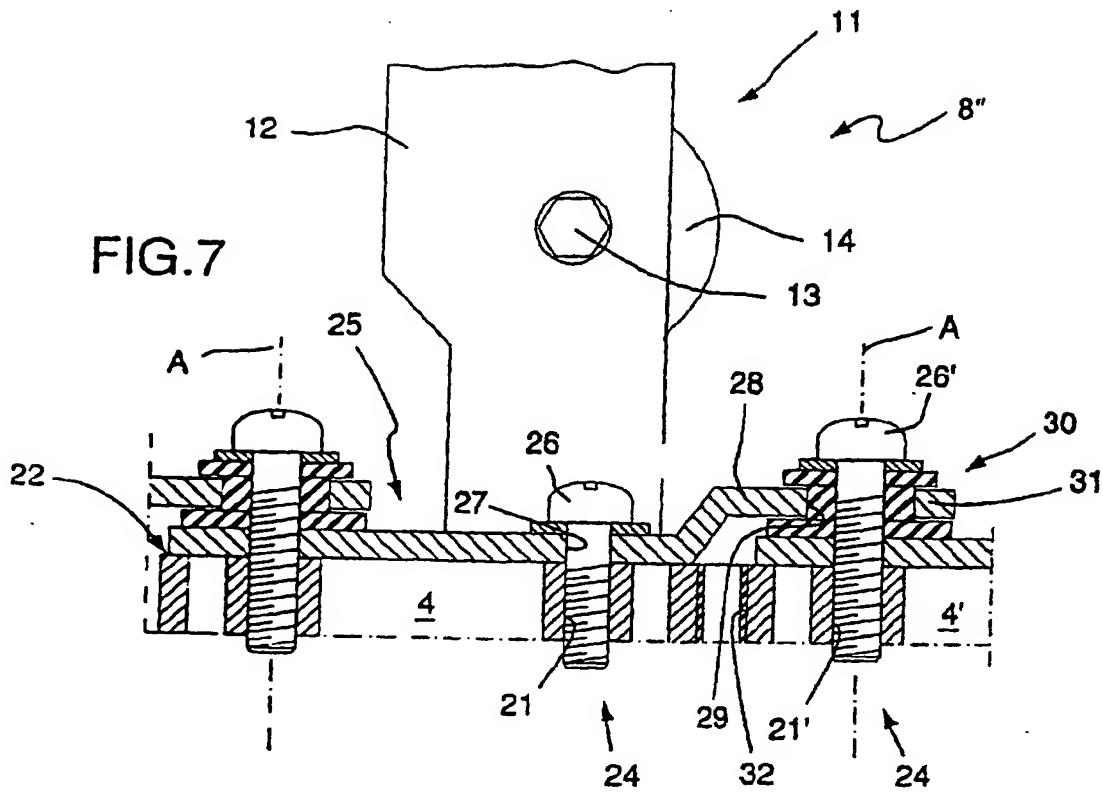
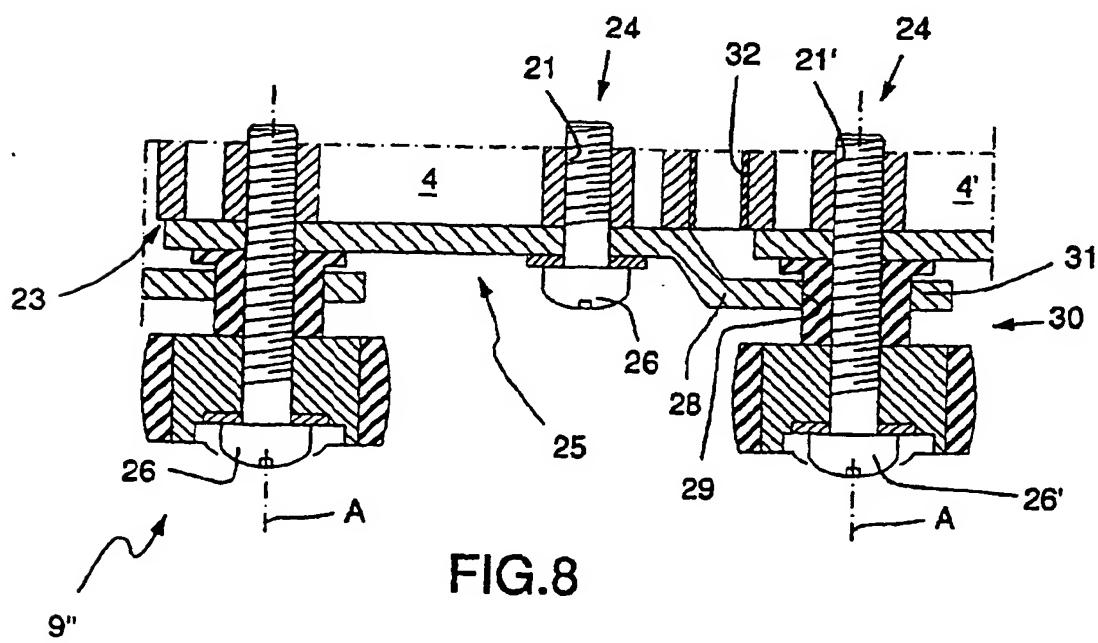


FIG.8



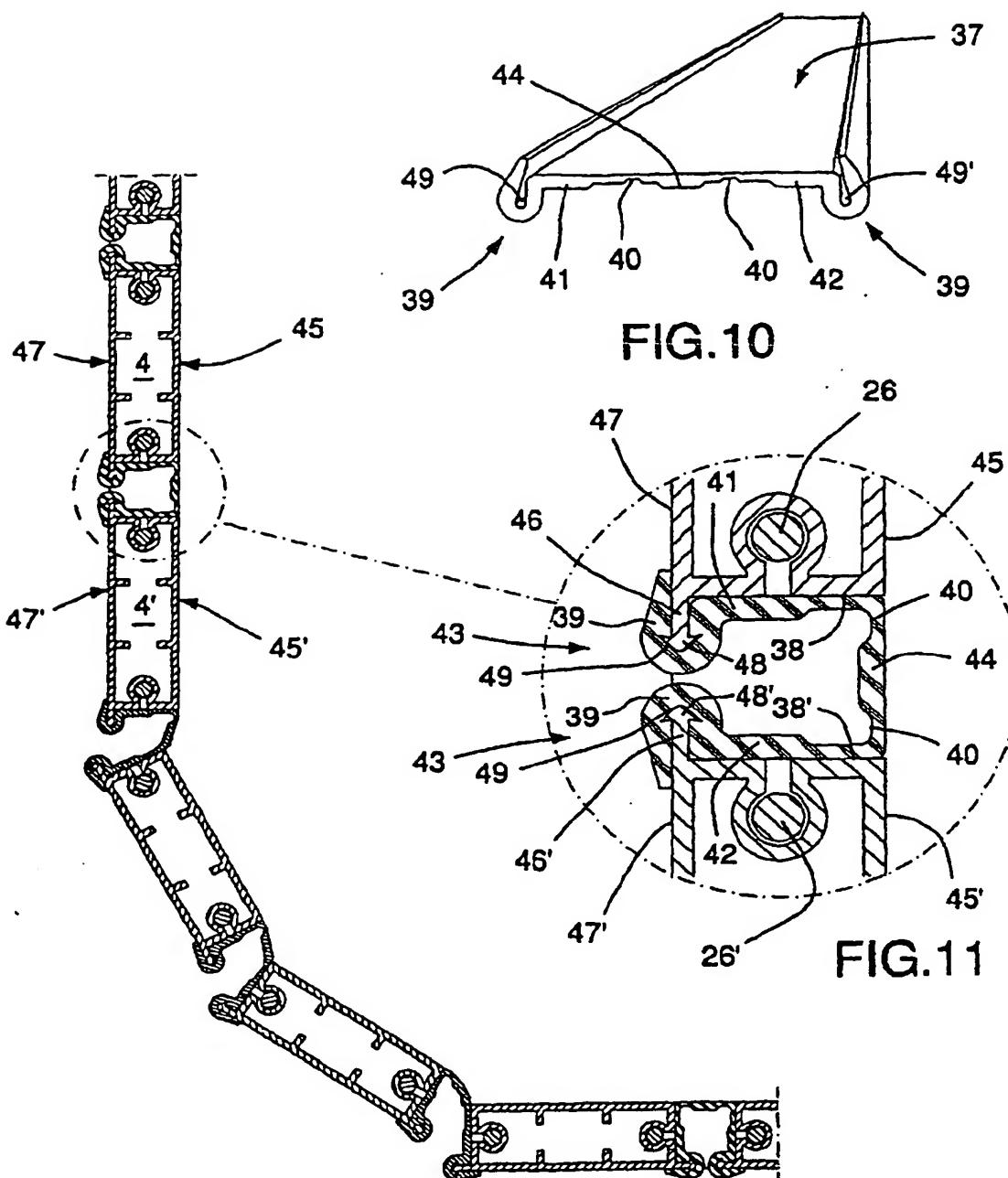


FIG.9

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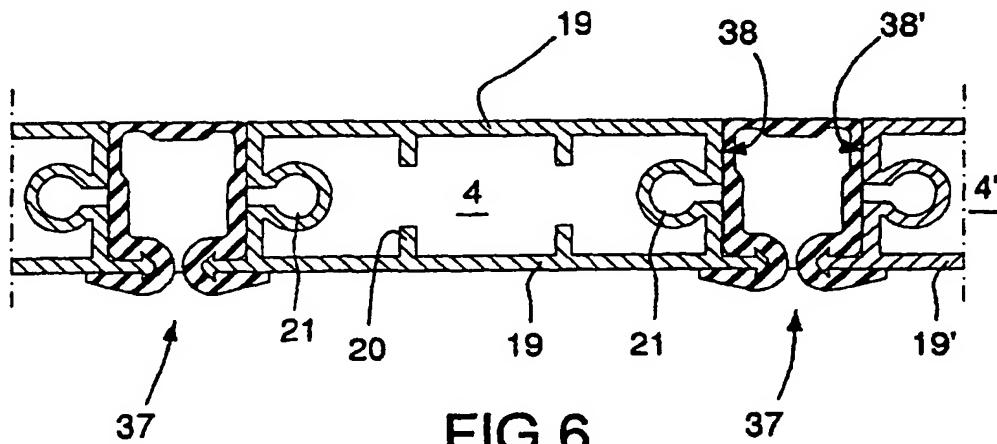
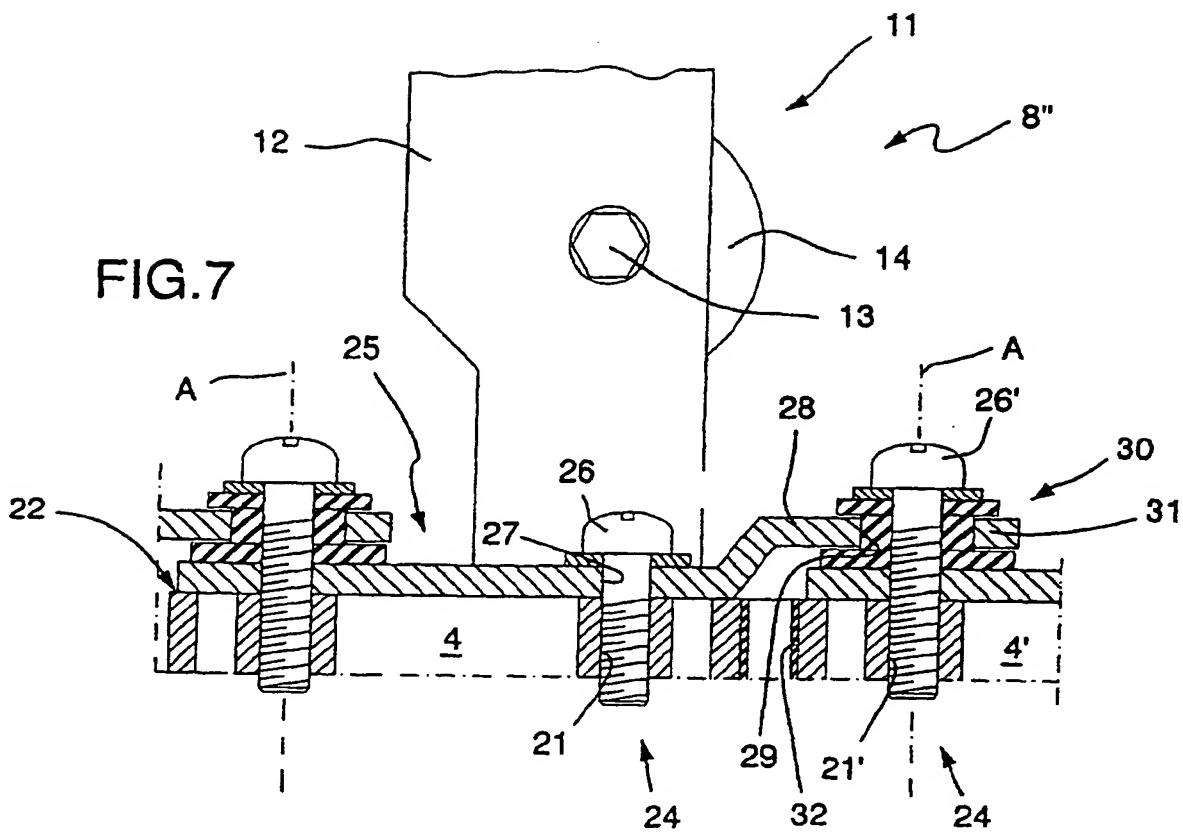


FIG.7





European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 85 0175

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT					
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)		
X	US 6 082 499 A (O'DONNELL TIMOTHY P) 4 July 2000 (2000-07-04) * column 5, line 54 - line 58 * * column 7, line 1 - line 8 * ---	1,7, 10-12 8,9 ---	E05D1/02 E05D15/12 E06B3/48 E05D15/06 B66B13/30		
X	DE 29 01 371 A (WALMUE BADEOEFEN CHRISTIAN WAL) 31 July 1980 (1980-07-31) * page 32, paragraphs 4,6 * * page 38, paragraph 2 *	1-7,10, 11			
Y	US 3 003 551 A (FERRIS ROBERT G) 10 October 1961 (1961-10-10) * figures *	8,9 ---			
Y	DE 69 25 272 U (THEURER R.) 26 February 1970 (1970-02-26) * page 1, paragraph 2 * * page 8, paragraph 5 *	1,2,7,10 ---			
Y	GB 535 552 A (WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC INT CO) 11 April 1941 (1941-04-11) * page 1, paragraph 2 * * page 2, line 52 - line 100 *	1,2,7,10 -----	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E05D B66B E06B</td> </tr> </table>	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)	E05D B66B E06B
TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)					
E05D B66B E06B					
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims					
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner			
THE HAGUE	3 October 2003	Witasse-Moreau, C			
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS					
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document					
T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document					



European Patent
Office

Application Number

EP 01 85 0175

CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

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European Patent
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LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B

Application Number
EP 01 85 0175

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-7,10-12

1.1. Claims: 1-7
jointing elements between panels of a sectional sliding door

1.2. Claims: 1,10-12
sectional sliding door with rail/roller-type guiding means

2. Claims: 1,8,9,13

connecting and bearing device for the guiding means of a sectional sliding door

Please note that all inventions mentioned under item 1, although not necessarily linked by a common inventive concept, could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee.

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 01 85 0175

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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03-10-2003

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